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ABSTRACT

This book seeks to assess how, after 70 years of hostility and restriction in the former Soviet Union, religion could be made accessible to students and to young men training for the priesthood. A study of religious and theological education in Russia and the Ukraine is reported in which over 50 institutions were visited, including independent teaching institutions, state institutions of higher education offering religious studies, theological educational institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church, and two Non-Orthodox communities in the Ukraine. The following issues are raised: the possibility of teaching people to assess religious values and their impact; the role of religion in a predominantly secular society; and the role of religious education in such a society. Many differences between religious institutions in Russia and the Ukraine and those in the West are identified, including much variation in course content and teaching approaches. Also noted are the many pressures and institutional constraints which surround the study of religion, especially in state institutions. The book concludes that the republics of the former Soviet Union are not experiencing a religious renaissance, and that social pressures will continue to make sound religious and theological teaching difficult.
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